



FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH OF HARTFORD

January/February 2026

# Living By Faith



## *From the Pastor's Desk*

### **WALKING TOGETHER INTO 2026**

Dear Church Family,

As we step into the year 2026, many of us are still carrying pieces of last year with us — in hopes that are still taking shape, worries that have not yet faded, and prayers that remain unanswered. Some begin this new year with excitement and expectation. Others arrive quietly, unsure of what lies ahead. Wherever you find yourself today, one truth holds us together: *before we take our next step, God has already gone ahead of us.*

The road before us is not always clear. At times, it feels like standing on a mountain wrapped in morning clouds, able to see only a few steps ahead. Yet Scripture reminds us that faith does not begin with clarity—it begins with trust.

**“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”**

**(Proverbs 3:5–6)**

Even when we cannot see what lies ahead, God is already at work. Even when the path feels uncertain, God remains faithful to guide us. Our hope for the new year does not come from having everything figured out, but from trusting the One who walks with us, even when the way is unclear.



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738 WEST MONROE AVENUE, HARTFORD, WI 53027 | (262) 673-3290

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# *From the Pastor's Desk*

As we begin 2026, our prayer is that our church will continue to grow as a community that truly cares for one another. Not a community where only the strong move forward, but one that walks alongside the weary — where listening comes before speaking, and love comes before judgment.

The apostle Paul encourages us with these words:

**“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”  
(Galatians 6:2)**

Our vision for this year is not rooted in grand slogans, but in small, faithful acts of love—listening carefully to one person’s story, reaching out a hand to someone who has fallen, choosing to weep together and rejoice together. Through these quiet and ordinary moments, we trust that God’s kingdom will be revealed—gently, yet powerfully.

2026 may not be a perfect year, but we believe it will be a year in which we experience God’s grace more deeply. Even in our weakness, God continues to shape and strengthen this community. We look forward to witnessing together the beautiful ways God will be at work among us.

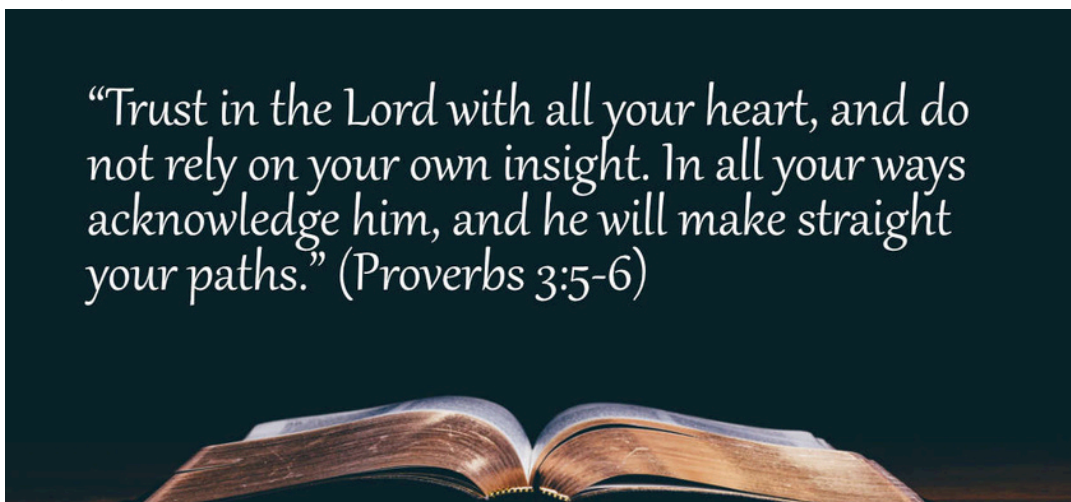
As we begin this new year, may we trust the God who calls us first and invites us to walk this journey together. I pray that each of you will experience God’s peace and hope throughout the year ahead.

Happy New Year. And let us keep walking together.

In Christ’s love,

*Pastor Hyunmin Lee*

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)





**With the New Year comes change with FUMC ALB members.**

**Many sincere thanks to Kathy Hack, John Moscicki, Chris Weed, and Dave Hoxworth for their dedication and service to the ALB over the past years. Their support of our church as ALB members has drawn to a close and we are appreciative of their time and talents. We know that they will continue to be a part of FUMC family in various other roles. THANK YOU!**

## **WE WELCOME FOUR NEW MEMBERS TO THE ALB.**

### **JAY TRIICK**

Jay has been a member of FUMC for many years. He has been married to Victoria for 14 1/2 yrs and together they have a blended family of five children and ten grandchildren. Throughout the years, Jay has taken part in leading the Senior High Sunday School, youth group, youth Mission Trips, various Bible studies and has represented our church on numerous international missions. He has served FUMC as a Lay Speaker for over two decades and enjoys sharing his faith from the pulpit. He currently works full time as both owner and veterinarian at Country Veterinary Clinic. His hobbies include participating in the new Men's Group at FUMC, cooking, traveling, fishing, and camping.

### **MARY BETH STEVENSON**

Mary Beth joined FUMC in 2021. She presently lives in Jackson. She has been active as a lay servant participating in classes to become a certified lay speaker. She serves FUMC presently as a Trustee, SPRC member (beginning 2026), funeral committee member, and a cook for Messy church and vacation bible school. Mary Beth participates in the Sunday morning worship as a liturgist and usher and on occasion will also share her faith from the pulpit. Her hobbies include yard work (as she shares her talent with FUMC as seen in her planters and gardening at church in the summertime), walking and hiking. She also enjoys spending time at her place in Door County.

### **BOB KLOCKOW**

Bob has been a lifelong member of FUMC. He was in the second confirmation class of the new church building. He was an active member in youth group through high school. After college and a stint in the Peace Corp, Bob returned to FUMC where he restarted the youth group in 1990 and ran it for 10 years. and sang in the Senior Choir. Presently Bob sings in the Men's Choir and helps with various projects around church including the organ pipe removal this past spring. Bob lives in Hartford and has two college boys who join him in church when available. He works part-time in the summer delivering fertilizer to local farmers. His hobbies include bowling, golf and officiating swim meets. He also likes to garden /yard work and enjoys coin collecting.

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## MATT PRANGE

Matt has been a member of FUMC since 2024. He lives in Nashotah with his wife Brittany and their three children Bennett, Hannah and Vivianne. He will serve as the vice chair and secretary of the ALB. Professionally, Matt is a senior vice president of Supply Chain at Milwaukee Tool and brings a servant - leadership mindset and practical skills to the board. He has worked with strategic planning, mentoring emerging leaders, clear communication and thoughtful stewardship of people, time and resources - skills that help him organize volunteers, build strong teams, facilitate consensus and turn ideas into actionable ministry plans. In his free time, Matt enjoys sailing and spending time with his family.

We are so grateful for these four individuals who have agreed to serve on the FUMC ALB as we look forward to 2026.

Other members who remain on the board include **Nedra Johnson, Brad Hahn, Steve Key, Cheryl Malko, David Schlotthauer, Brian Swenson, Rob Bush, and Shari Purman.**

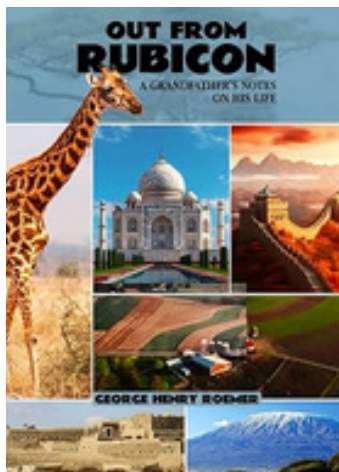
As always, if you have any concerns or questions, please contact one of these members.

Just a reminder that all members of FUMC are invited to attend ALB meetings which are held the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at church. Also, we invite you to attend the quarterly Town Hall meetings to keep you updated on ALB/church happenings. These are held between church services on Sunday mornings.

New Year Blessings as we work together to serve our church and the Hartford Community.

*Shari Purman*

Chairperson



## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

**CHERYL MALKO**

Our United Women in Faith is not meeting in January or February, but if you're hibernating this winter and want a good book to read, I recommend ***Out from Rubicon: A Grandfather's Notes on His Life***. The author is none other than our own FUMC member **George Roemer**, who will also be the speaker at our March meeting. His book is available from Amazon in paperback, hard cover and Kindle.

In November, in honor of our veterans, we welcomed Amy Luft who is the American Legion Auxiliary National Community Service Vice Chair and Department of WI Senior VP and, as such, is instrumental in coordinating and traveling on the Stars and Stripes Wisconsin Honor Stripes. Additionally FUMC's own Tom Paine shared his experience on a recent Honor Flight. We also welcomed both Larry Thomas from the Hartford American Legion Chapter and another FUMC veteran, John Moscicki.





Steven Key, Team Leader

### JANUARY MEETING/BREAKFAST RECAP

Held at FUMC Church Fellowship Hall/Kitchen  
Saturday, January 17th

Nineteen men of the First United Methodist Church attended this meeting where we discussed and began planning our outings and activities for 2026.



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND JOIN US.....

**What: Sprecher Brewery Tour**

**When: Saturday, February 21, 2026**

**Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

**Where: 701 West Glendale Avenue, Glendale, WI 53209**

Cost: \$20.00 / per person

- Includes: 45-minute tour, 4 Beer or Hard Soda Samples (21+ ID Required), and Unlimited Soda (All Ages).

Transportation: Carpool / On Your Own

Post tour activities: Late lunch / early dinner at a nearby establishment(s). TBD.

Who: Open to all members 18 and up and their partners/friends.

Please email Jim Gottfried ([james.gottfried@gmail.com](mailto:james.gottfried@gmail.com)) with the number of guests and whether any of your guests are under 21.

Payment Due to Jim: Sunday, February 15th, by 10:00 am.

- Cash

- Venmo: @James-Gottfried-2

- PayPal: @jamesgottfried

**What: Men of Faith Monthly Meeting**

**When: Thursday, Feb 26th -**

**Time 6:30 pm**

**Where: Fellowship Hall.**

David Schlotthauer will be providing the Spiritual message.



Photos from recent group outings



### **MEN OF FAITH MONTHLY MEETING & ACTIVITY / MARCH**

**What: EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) museum tour**

**When: Saturday, March 21st**

Handicap accessible Museum Tour starts at 10:00 AM, Oshkosh Transportation - Carpool/On your own. Unfortunately, the bus didn't work out Cost \$12.00 per person, everyone is welcome Lunch after will be an option somewhere in Oshkosh Sign up due to Steven Key by March 15th.

**What: Men of Faith Monthly Meeting**

**When: Thursday, March 26th**

Time 6:30 pm

Fellowship Hall.

Program/Spiritual message TBD

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## **FUNDRAISER - YOUR HELP IS GREATLY APPRECIATED**

**Cheryl Malko**

**Purpose: Our National Hmong Caucus of the UMC is sponsoring a church building project for Lao Samphang (Lao United) Methodist Church in Laos, Vientiane Province.**

**It will be a center for Lao Samphang Methodists in the region. Our recent egg roll fundraiser helped with donations and travel for the opening of this new center being completed this coming summer. Your support is greatly appreciated.**



# Children and Family Ministries

Brianna Lee - Children and Family Ministries Director

brianna.fumc@gmail.com

(262)673-3290 ~ (262)709-6071

What a wonderful Holiday Season we experienced this fall and winter at FUMC Hartford!

We heard beautiful songs from the children's choir for All Saints Sunday, the 50th Anniversary Celebration, the Advent Luncheon, Youth Group Caroling at local nursing homes, and the Children's Christmas Program. The children worked so hard and did an incredible job with "The Not-So Silent Night" Christmas Program. We also had a small group of Sunday School kids and families join us to see The David Movie at the Hartford Movie Theater!

It is still so crazy to think that another year of growing faith has come and gone!

As I look ahead to 2026, I can't wait for more fun growing faith with the children and families of FUMC.

## Important Upcoming Dates

### Messy Church

January 7th, 6pm

February 11th, 6pm

### Noisy Can Collection

January 18th

February 15th

March 15th



The David Movie Outing,  
Caroling at nursing homes,  
and Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service



# JOIN US Youth Ministry *get involved*



## Youth Ministry News: January–February Updates

*Greetings, Church Family!*

We are excited to share the latest happenings with our 6th–12th grade youth! Our students and I hope you had a happy and blessed Christmas and are enjoying the start of the 2026 New Year.

### YOUTH GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

First and foremost, we cannot thank our church family enough for their overwhelming support during our Annual Youth Pie Auction last month. Your donations nearly totaled \$1000 and will help us to fund our Youth Group activities and service projects.

Our November Youth Group gathering was truly a blessing as our youth ventured into neighboring communities to collect food pantry donations for the Hartford Food Pantry. Their hard work and generous hearts resulted in a bountiful collection, which we celebrated with a pizza party. The Food Pantry volunteers expressed deep gratitude and humility for the youth's dedication to serving those in need.

In December, 14 participants visited two local nursing homes, where they shared the love of Jesus Christ through the gift of Christmas carols. Following this meaningful time of fellowship, the group enjoyed a meal together at Culver's, made possible by the kindness of 2 anonymous and generous donors. Thank you – your support means more to us than you know.

These service-focused activities continue to be among our most popular gatherings, drawing our highest attendance and touching my heart deeply. It is clear that our youth learn, grow, and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit most profoundly when they are engaged in selfless acts of service.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL: EXPLORING THE WORD

The past two months have been filled with joyful celebrations and holiday travel, and now we are excited to return to our regular rhythm of learning and growing together. As we move forward, our Youth will be diving back into the New Testament and the Gospels, focusing on the life of Jesus—who He was and what He taught.

We are currently averaging about 10 youth in attendance each Sunday, and we would love to see that number continue to grow. Please encourage your youth to join us and remember that friends are always welcome! The more, the merrier as we continue to deepen our faith and fellowship together.

## UPCOMING EVENTS: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### JANUARY YOUTH GROUP:

In January, we met on Sunday, January 18th from 4:30–7pm for “Chili Cook Off and Game Night” in the Youth Room. Bring your family’s secret chili recipe to share and enter contest to win! Don’t forget to bring your favorite board/card game to play!

### FEBRUARY YOUTH GROUP:

In February, we will travel to Sky Zone on Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. We will jump from 1–3pm. Meet in the Youth Room at 12:15. We should be home around 4 pm.

## GET INVOLVED

As always, we’re looking for ways to grow and encourage our youth in their faith and service. If you know any 6th–12th graders who could benefit from these experiences, please invite them to join us! We are looking forward to an exciting and busy end to the year, and we hope to see you and your youth involved in all these wonderful opportunities.

Blessings,

**Brittany Prange**

Youth Ministry Coordinator



# Hospitality Ministry

**"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way  
in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."**

**Isaiah 43:18-19**

It's remarkable that 2026 has already arrived. The new year gives us all an opportunity to refresh and begin anew, encouraging us to focus on action rather than regrets about the past. We are reminded that God is present with us every day, guiding and supporting us through both challenges and successes. My hope is that we can make this year our best yet. At First United Methodist Church, the Hospitality team remains committed to reaching out to those without a church home, offering the love and support of our church family, and working towards our ongoing mission of making disciples in Christ.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Hospitality is pleased to announce our 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off Competition, taking place on February 8th from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm. We're looking forward to a fun afternoon of laughter, good food and church community goodness.

## PAST EVENTS

Our **Advent Luncheon** was once again very successful. We extend our appreciation to everyone who contributed by decorating tables, preparing meals, cleaning, organizing, and serving. Special thanks to Jim, Heidi, Harrison Gottfried, Linda Thompson, and Emily Schuhmacher for providing entertainment. Proceeds from the event will contribute \$1000 toward completing the music corner in the sanctuary.

## CHRISTMAS PARADE FLOAT

We achieved second place in the parade for the second consecutive year. We sincerely thank all who assisted with the float and participated in the parade.

## FUTURE EVENTS

Plans are underway for another craft night in February; further information will be shared soon. If you have questions regarding any of these events, please contact me via phone, text, or email at 262-224-2442 or victoriatriick@gmail.com.

Blessings and Happy New Year

*Victoria Triick*

Hospitality Ministry  
Team Leader

